GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:134
ANSWERED ON:18.02.2003
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT
A. VENKATESH NAIK;AJAY CHAKRABORTY;ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL;AVSM, BRIG.(RETD.) KAMAKHYA PRASAD SINGH DEO;PUTTASWAMY GOWDA;RAMSHETH THAKUR;SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI;SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a two day National Conference of Ministers and Secretaries of the RuralDevelopment, Panchayati Raj and Public Works Department was held in New Delhi; recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any concensus have been reached therein regarding implementation of development schemes;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the views of the State Government in the matter;

(f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(g) the other achievement of the said conference;

(h) whether the Government have launched a scheme Hariyali involving the Panchayats in Watershed Management;

(i) if so, the details of the schemes and the extent to which it will help rural communities to conserve water for drinking, irrigation, afforestation and fisheries; and

(j) the funds likely to be sanctioned for this purpose;

(k) whether the guidelines have been issued for utilization of funds under the water management plans as mentioned in Times of India dated 28 January, 2003; and

(l) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M. K. PATIL)

(a) Yes Sir, a two day Conference of the State Ministers of Rural Development,Panchayati Raj and Public Works Department was held on 27-28 January, 2003, in New Delhi, to review the progress under various development programmes being implemented by the Ministry.

(b) The Conference was attended by Ministers and Secretaries of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Public Works Departments from States. It was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, who also launched the new Scheme `Haryali` on the occasion. Discussions were held on the status of implementation of the different Centrally Sponsored Schemesbeing funded by the Ministry of Rural Development in the conference.

(c) to (g) The Summary of the discussionswhich include discussions on issues related to implementation of various schemes, are given in Annexure.

(h) Yes Sir, the scheme `Haryali` for involving the Panchyats in Watershed Programmewas launched by the Prime Minister at the beginning of the Conference.

(i) & (j) `Haryali` is a country wide programme with the dual objective of tackling the problem of water scarcity and augmenting the resources of the Panchayats in an attempt to strengthen them. Under the Scheme, Panchayats will undertake rainwater conservation measures with technical assistance from state administration and use the impounded water for irrigation, fisheries and tree plantation, including horticulture. The income from water- user charges and the sale proceeds of fisheries will add to the panchayat`s resources.

(k) & (l) The Guidelines for `Haryali` are under preparation.

ANNEXURE

Annexure to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 134 due for answer on 18.02.2003.

Summary of the discussions of the conference of state Ministers of Rural Development,Panchayati Raj and Public Works was heldon 27-28 January, 2003, in New Delhi.

The Conference was inaugurated by the Hon`ble Prime Minister and was alsoaddressed by the Hon`ble Deputy Chaiman, Planning Commission. Major CentrallySponsored Programmes being funded by the Ministry of Rural Development and the issuesrelated to the implementation of the 73 Constitution Amendment Act were discussed in the technical sessions of the Conference. The summary of the issues discussed is as follows: Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) : The State Ministers / representativesbriefly touched upon the progress made in the implementation of PMGSY. Other issuesraised during the Conference included inter alia, those relating to increase in the Allocation, Restoration of contingency funds to Programme Implementing Units (PIUs), and extending the execution period.

Panchayati Raj : Status of Election, Devolution of Powers to PRIs and constitution ofDPCs was discussed.States are at different level of achievement in this regard. The need to empower and strengthen PRIs to make them effective institutions of local self-governance was reiterated in the Conference. States generally expressed their commitment to achieve these.

Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) :While the States were satisfied with the release of the instalments and reported various levels of utilization of the cash component, it was felt that timely release of quality foodgrains from FCI godowns, and lifting and utilization of foodgrains for employment generation needed improvement. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): Some state Ministers had highlighted the pendency of applications for sanction of loan , the time-lag between sanction of loan and disbursement and high rate of rejection of applications, under the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana.

Watershed Development Programmes : Hon`ble Prime Ministerlaunched a new initiative of the Department of Land Resources namely `Haryali` which aims at empowering of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in Planning, execution and managing the watershed activities.

Rural Housing : The States highlighted the necessity of increasing per unit assistance underIAY. The problem of delay in release of release of 2nd instalment of funds was discussed. States were informed about deficiencies in proposals and clarifications that were needed for processing them so that second instalment could be released.

Monitoring and Vigilance : Regarding the reconstitution of Vigilance & MonitoringCommittees at district level (with MP , LS, as Chairperson), some of the state representatives felt that this contradicts the spirit of decentralization process and Panchayati Raj Institutions would be denied their due rights. A request was, therefore made for reviewing the reconstitution of V & M Committees. Some States also desired that they may be allowed to nominate some members of these Committees.